



Concept Note

Participation of Mayors and Local Governments during the

Conference of the state parties to the United Nations Convention against corruption

7th Session - 8th – 9th November 2017, Vienna (Austria)

[#commit2transparency](#)

with the participation of



together for the local implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the New urban agenda



Background

The Conference of the State Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (COSP) is the main policy-making body of the United Nations regarding the fight against corruption. The Conference meets every two years to adopt resolutions and decisions to be implemented by Member States to the supports States parties and signatories in their implementation of the Convention, and gives policy guidance to develop and implement anti-corruption activities.

The UN Convention against corruption was approved by member states of the United Nations in 2003 and entered into force in December 2005. Actually, 140 countries are part of the Convention. The United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is the custodian of the Convention and the main organizer of the Vienna Conference as custodian of the UN Convention.

The role of local governments in fighting corruption

The municipality is the first door to access government for many citizens. Local governments are closer to the people and also responsible to provide essential basic services such as water, electricity, sanitation or waste collection. Local governments are often the institution providing the direct link with citizens and where national strategies and policies touch reality.

When corruption occurs locally, it impacts deeply on the lives of citizens, with the poorest often being hit the hardest. Most of the public trust in the role government is created (and lost) at the local level. When local governments are inefficient or corrupt, cities cannot reach their potential as a place for poverty reduction, social progress, economic growth, environmental protection or cultural development.

Many local governments in the world are committed to fight corruption, creating more transparent and accountable cities, able to communicate more with their citizens and to govern better.

Transparency, accountability and open government at local level are essential strategies to increase control of citizens over public affairs. And cities are the perfect space to experiment new forms of fighting corruption and bring openness to public management, improving the levels of trust in public institutions and creating the opportunity for citizens to play a more active role in city management.

In this context, the United Nations Human Settlement Program, together with the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces launched in 2016 the Urban GLASS project "Governing with the citizen". The project is creating awareness about the necessity for cities and local governments to actively start fighting corruption in urban development. But also to bring international attention about the essential role of local governments as agents who effectively are already fighting corruption and generating trust in the role of public sector.

As part of this effort, the project is supporting the participation of Mayors and other local government officials in several international events, including the 15th and 16th International Anti-Corruption Conference (in Putrajaya and Panama respectively), during the Paris Summit of the Open Government Partnership in 2016, when, for the first time, the City of Paris hosted a Mayors Roundtable and where

the major local government networks subscribed the “Paris Statement” in occasion of the International Anti-corruption Day of 9th December 2016.



The Vienna Conference constitutes a perfect opportunity to bring the voices of Mayors and local government to the discussions at national level. This will be the first time when the constituency of local governments formally participates in the Conference of the Parties. The events will also contribute to inform the “Community of practice on transparent and open local government” that will be created within the major local government association UCLG – United Cities and Local Governments.

The days in Vienna are therefore an important contribution to inform the next steps for the Community to work, as well as a key window to showcase the work of local governments in fighting corruption in the framework of the UN Anti-corruption Convention, normally reserved to central government action.

Objectives of the event

- 1) To create awareness about the role of cities as place to implement transparency policies and prevent corruption.
- 2) To bring the experiences of the participating Mayors to showcase how they promote more effective, transparent and just cities.

- 3) To provide a space of dialogue between the national governments, parties of the UN Convention and the local governments about how to collaborate to better fight corruption.
- 4) To identify success factors and risks in implementing local policies on transparency, accountability and citizen participation in city management.
- 5) To provide inputs to the next session of the High Level Political Forum (New York, July 2018) about examples synergies between SDGs 11 (Sustainable Cities) and SDG 16 (effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels).

The participation of local governments during the Conference of the Parties on the UN Convention is as a perfect opportunity to promote a multi-level debate on the role of cities to fight corruption and the benefits of implementing transparency policies to urban management.

The events will be co-organized by [UN-Habitat](#) and [FEMP](#) (in the framework of the [Urban GLASS](#) initiative) and in collaboration with the [Austrian Association of cities and towns](#), [United Cities and Local Governments](#) and the [United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime](#).

Wednesday, November 8th 2017

Title of the event: Transparent and open cities: key to achieve the sustainable development goals.

Time and venue: 17.00 – 19.00h at the YOUNION (Union of the municipal civil servants), Maria Theresien Straße 11, 1090 Vienna.



Agenda

17.00 – 17.05	Welcome to the Delegation and introduction to the institutional context of the Urban GLASS initiative. Diana Lopez Caramazana, Head, Local Government and Decentralization Unit, UN-Habitat.
17.05 – 17.25	The role of Austrian cities in promoting transparency, open government and the prevention of corruption. Alexander Lesigang, International Cooperation Department, Austrian Association of Cities and Towns.
17.25 – 17.45	The role of municipal servants for high quality public services and transparency in Austria, Thomas Kattnig, Member of the Federal Steering Committee, Austrian Union of Municipal Servants (YOUNION) Q & A with the group
17.45 – 18.15	Representative from the internal auditing office of the City of Vienna Representative of Transparency International – Austrian Chapter
18.15 – 19.00	Regional visions from Africa, Asia and Latin America. Open debate with Mayors and local government representatives. <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mrs. Sally Ante Lee, Mayor of Sorsogon City, Philippines- Mr. Richard Rwabuhinga, District Chairperson of Kabarole, Uganda- Mayor representing the Mexican Federation of Municipalities, FENAMM (to be confirmed).

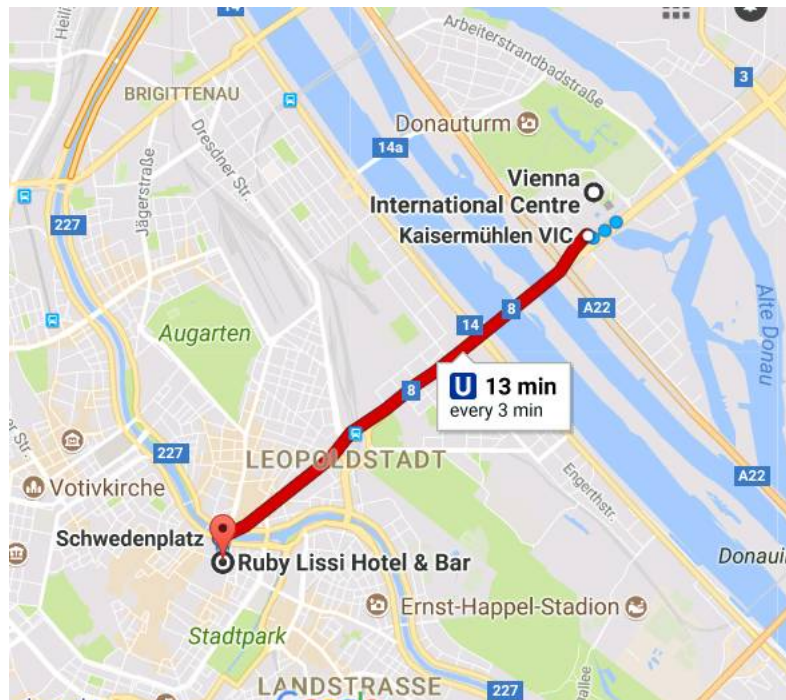
Thursday, November 9th 2017

Title of the event: Technical visit to the City of Vienna. *specific project to be confirmed

Time and venue: 10.00 – 13.00h *exact time and place to be confirmed

Title of the event: Official side event of local governments at the UN Anti-corruption Convention. “Fighting corruption in cities: identifying risks and reacting on time, the role of local governments”

Time and venue: 15.30 to 17.00 in room M03 at the Vienna International Centre.



This side event will take place within the official program of the Conference. It will be the first time that Mayors and local governments take part of the Conference of the Parties bringing the urban dimension to the effective implementation of the UN Convention against corruption. The session will contribute to focus in the specific characteristics of cities as a place where most of the people of the planet will live by 2030, as places of opportunity and motors of socio-economic development. It will focus in the achievement of SDGs 11 (sustainable cities) and SDG 16 (effective institutions), bringing the voices of Mayors and an urban perspective to the COSP.

The main outcome of the session will be to identify common challenges and innovative solutions to tackle corruption in cities, bringing the local perspective and pointing out the role that local governments can play in the fight against corruption. Finally, the session aims to increase awareness on how the development and promotion of policies and initiatives of transparency and accountability at local level are key to improving the living conditions of citizens through the provision of efficient and effective services in an open, competitive and fair manner and how they can improve levels of trust in public institutions by offering citizens the tools and information needed in order to play a more active role in the management of cities.

For more information regarding the Conference, we advise the members of the Delegation to visit

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/COSP/session7.html>

and specifically to read the document "Report of the Secretariat on the status of implementation of Conference resolution 6/6, entitled "Follow-up to the Marrakech declaration on the prevention of corruption".

Agenda

15.30 – 15.45	The experience of Africa, Mr. Richard Rwabuhinga, Chairperson of Kabarole District, Uganda, representing UCLG Africa.
15.45 – 16.00	The experience of Asia, Mrs. Sally Ante Lee, Mayor of Sorsogon City, Philippines, representing UCLG Asia.
16.00 – 16.15	Debate with the public
16.15 – 16.30	The experience of Latin America, Mayor to be confirmed, representing FLACMA.
16.30 – 16.45	The experience in Europe, Mr. David Lucas Parrón, Mayor of Mostoles, Spain, representing the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces.
16.45 – 17.00	Debate with the public and conclusions by the Moderator.

Moderator: Diana Lopez Caramazana, Head, Local Government and Decentralization Unit, UN-Habitat, United Nations Human Settlements Programme

Rapporteur: Juana López Pagán, Head of International Relations and European Projects, FEMP, Spanish Association of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP)..

Questions for the speakers

The session seeks to find a wide range of responses to the following questions:

- What are the experiences and best practices of the participating Mayors in fighting corruption and creating citizen trust in their management? How much does transparency and open government policies contribute in achieving that?
- What are the main constraints and problems that corruptions entails for local governments to guarantee equal access to basic services? What can be done to improve this? Does civic participation in service provision activities help to increase their quality and equality?
- Are there any challenges of articulation between the different levels of government to guarantee transparent and open cities? How can these be overcome?

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